

# Deuteronomy 31:1-29

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     The following sermon is from Grace and Peace Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Grace and Peace is a new church that exists for the glory of God and the good of the northeast suburbs of Hamilton Place, Collegedale, and Ottawa.
- You can find help more by visiting [gracepeacechurch.org](http://gracepeacechurch.org). All right, good morning, Grace and Peace.
- Such a delight to be joining you this morning as we look into God's Word. Pastor Benji and I have been getting to know each other and just so grateful for the invitation to be here. And as he mentioned, been here since beginning of 2020 and came in right before COVID started.
- And it's been quite a ride so far. So I'm still getting to know folks. And so when I walk into our church and see new faces, I feel like I'm at New City Eastlake because I see new faces every Sunday morning.
- Pastor Benji asked me to choose one of my favorite sermons. I have none, but I do have my favorite books in the Bible. So I chose just one of the passages from the book of Deuteronomy that I really wanted to share with you.
- [ 1 : 1 5 ]     So we're reading from the book of Deuteronomy chapter 31. I'm only going to read verses 1 through 8, but we will be walking through the whole text because it's really important for us to look at the whole context of what Moses is writing to God's people here.
- So let's hear the reading of God's Word as we begin looking into God's Word this morning. Deuteronomy chapter 31. I'm going to read verses 1 through 8. So Moses continued to speak these words to all Israel.
- And he said to them, I am 120 years old today. I'm no longer able to go out and come in. The Lord has said to me, You shall not go over to this Jordan.
- The Lord your God himself will go over before you. He will destroy these nations before you so that you shall dispossess them. And Joshua will go over at your head as the Lord has spoken.
- And the Lord will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land when he destroyed them. And the Lord will give them over to you, and you shall do to them according to the whole commandment that I have given you.
- [ 2 : 2 3 ]     Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them. For it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.
- Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and courageous. For you shall go with his people into the land that the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall put them in possession of it.
- It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you. He will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.
- This is the word of the Lord. Would you pray with me? Lord, we are truly grateful to you that you give us your word that is true, that is the bread of life.

And Lord, it is hard for us sometimes to hear what it says, and to believe what it calls us to believe. And yet this is your word that transforms us from the inside out.

[ 3 : 22 ] So we can only come to you and pray for your spirit to guide us this morning, to help us to hear it, to help us to believe it, to help us to be transformed by its power.

We pray this in your name. Amen. So again, as I mentioned, it's interesting that I would pick to choose, I would choose to speak on a passage in Deuteronomy that talks about change, that talks about succession of power as Moses is about to die, and Joshua is about to succeed in leadership and take God's people into the promised land.

But I really chose this passage for personal reasons. So allow me to share with you why. This passage talks about change that happens in our life.

And my family feels like we've been going through a whole lot of changes. You know, we moved from Baltimore in 2020 and came to a new city, a new life, moved back into the deep south from the northeast, even though Maryland is really the south, but they don't like admitting that.

Don't tell them that. And here we are. And, you know, after two months of being here, church was shut down as soon as I was just beginning to get to know people. And people started wearing masks.

[ 4 : 39 ] Everything, just the future seems so uncertain for us. And I remember one time just wondering, why on earth did God bring us here? What is going on?

I mean, we're supposed to come to this place, this beautiful place with beautiful mountains in Tennessee, and get to enjoy a nice mild weather, no more snow and shoveling snow on the streets and no more traffic, DC traffic.

And here we were, and I'm questioning why God had brought us to this place, to this church that I did not even know. And I'm sure that all of us can identify with how the pandemic has affected all of us, right?

I mean, COVID has just brought about so many changes. Life has changed the way we do. Life has just changed. The way we view life has changed. Everything's shutting down, and we're faced with uncertainty.

We don't know what tomorrow holds, what tomorrow looks like. We've faced fear in our own lives, whether it's fear that we're going to die, whether it's fear that some of our vulnerable brothers and sisters would die.

[ 5 : 40 ] We've faced a sense of loss, loss of community, loss of friendship, loss of gathering together. I mean, churches are just kind of getting back into normalcy, as we say.

And I believe that none of us was prepared for the change that was about to happen, or that was happening around us during COVID. We have changed. Life has changed.

And what's true is that we will continue to experience changes as we move along, right? Change is inevitable. And we all know the rhythms of life that we go through, that we face different changes, different seasons of life.

And sometimes we try to be prepared for the changes that are about to happen. Other times we're not so prepared. Sometimes change can be good. Other times change can be horrible.

But again, whether we're prepared or not, we know that change is inevitable. And sometimes changes can be exhausting. They can be fearful. They can be frustrating, to say the least.

[ 6 : 42 ] Yet I think, and I believe that this passage that we just read this morning reminds us, as God's people, that we can take heart, that while we may change, while circumstances may change, while life around us may change, one thing remains constant for the church, for the Christian, and it is this.

In every season of our life, God promises to be present with us through it all. In every circumstance, in every season of life, that our God, the unchanging God, promises to always be with us.

And because of that, we can deal with any and every change that comes our way, because we are never alone. The unchanging hand of your God is always with you in every season.

So what are the two things that I believe Moses is reminding God's people to hear in this passage? Just two very simple things. I believe Moses is reminding his people, reminding us, that one, there's a reality we must remember as we go through changes in life.

And two, there's a truth we must believe. A reality we must remember and a truth we must believe. Look with me again as Moses writes in verses one.

[ 8 : 04 ] It says, so Moses continued to speak to these people, words to all Israel. By the way, this actually goes back to the very beginning, to the very beginning of the book of Deuteronomy.

The words of God that he speaks to his people, the covenant renewal that he brings to his people as they are on the plains of Moab about to possess the land. And again, remember, Israel has been going through changes in their life, right?

They've been in a season of change. It might have taken such a long time, but they've been going through a whole lot of change. Think about their history just real quick. From the very beginning, they're in slavery in Egypt where they cry out to the Lord because of their oppression and the Lord hears their cries and he sends Moses who comes to their rescue and delivers them.

And then because of the rebellion, they end up spending 40 years on a journey in the wilderness with Moses, grumbling and complaining about God. And now they're here.

They sit on the plains of Moab. They are about to possess the land that was promised to their fathers. They're about to approach this beautiful place that flows with milk and honey, this place that God had told Abraham and Jacob and Isaac, this was going to be your home.

[ 9 : 18 ] They can stand there and look over the horizon and go like, that is the place that our fathers were promised to possess. But even as they're about to possess this land, they realize, okay, something else is about to happen.

I mean, you think about the immense changes that are going on here, right? Moses is about to die. As I just read, he's 120 years. I mean, he's still okay, but he's still old.

He says, I'm no longer able to go out and come in. The Lord has said to me, you are not going to that land. So imagine the change of leadership and the anxiety, the fear, the uncertainty that grips their hearts about the future.

What's going to happen? I mean, Moses has been with us. We've complained about, you know, with him and told him all the things that we're not happy about, but he's been our leader. This guy performed miracles in Egypt. This guy provided water at Maryberg.

This guy has been with us all along. What's going to happen to us now as we approach this land? There are giants that live in the land of Canaan. Who is going to destroy them?

[ 10 : 19 ] Who is going to be victorious on our behalf? So they're fearful. They're frustrated. They're uncertain. But I believe they're also excited about this land, this beautiful land that flows with milk and honey.

But before they either get too frustrated or too excited, Moses tells them, okay, here's something for you to remember, which is our life as well. As we go through changes in life, there are realities that we need to keep in mind, to remember.

Again, as I said, Moses is old. He's lived a full life. In fact, we're told, you know, Moses has lived 120 years. That's a little curious there. That 120 years, right? You think about it.

Moses has gone through three cycles of life. 40 years in Egypt, 40 years in Midian, and 40 years in the wilderness.

Interesting. The number 40 in Scripture symbolizes something, right? A time of testing. Jesus being tempted and all these things.

[ 11 : 20 ] And now it's time for Moses after going through all these changes, the three cycles of change for him to rest. Yet this is such a crucial time for God's people as they are about to possess the land.

They're in a transition, a major transition. Leadership. But also moving from the wilderness into this land that God has promised them and Moses is reminding them, by the way, remember, you have been disobedient.

You have been rebellious. You have fallen. Isn't that our story? A story that's filled with unfaithfulness and sin and rebellion against God that we disobey.

And you keep reading on and you realize that Moses is actually telling the people, yeah, you will rebel even while I'm alive. You're about to rebel against God. And he's going to discipline you because that's what we do.

That's what we face when we disobey, when we rebel against God. If you follow along and go all the way down to verses 17, a very curious passage. Verse 16, he says, And the Lord said to Moses, Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers and these people will rise and hoar after their foreign gods among them in the land that they are entering and they will forsake me and break my covenant that I have made with them.

[ 12 : 38 ] Now listen to verses 17. Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day and I will forsake them and hide my face from them and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will come upon them so that they will say in that day.

What do they say? Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us. They recognize their fallenness and their sin but instead of repentance they are only missing God's presence.

Not turning to Him but they are saying He is not here. He's left us on our own. That's why these troubles are coming upon us but no, your troubles are coming upon you because you've been rebellious and you've been sinful.

What am I getting at? One of the realities that we must remember in times of change is that things, that the things of this world will always tempt us. The things of this world will always tempt us.

So our love will not always be focused on God. That there are so many things that clamor for our attention that are calling on to us and saying look at me, here I am.

[ 13 : 50 ] And they will take our eyes off of Christ and His presence with us. And yes, we are not the people that are going to be tempted as they are here to go worship carved images of the gods of the Canaanites.

No, that's not us but we sure do have our own share of gods in our lives that tempt us. Whether it's money, whether it's power and fame and sex and human reason, whatever it is, there are things that will always clamor for our attention.

The question is are we always going to stand there and saying God is not with us or are we going to recognize what we have done and the fact that we've taken our eyes off of God and say we come to Him and we repent and we recognize that our troubles are because we have focused on things that are not the things that we're supposed to be focusing on.

Because listen, this is what happens. When we go to those things and we realize that they are not satisfying us and only God can do that, then we're driven to a place of fear. Then we're driven to a place of fear.

And another reality about fear is that we will fear things that ought not to frighten us. We are mostly afraid of things that should never be frightening to us.

[ 15 : 03 ] Because again, we've taken our eyes off of God. I mean, we know that God is fighting our battles. Israel knows how God has performed amazing miracles to deliver them from Egypt to bring them out from slavery.

Yet, it's so hard for them to see how the hand of God has been leading them and guiding them. And yet, even knowing that with our minds we're still fear, we're still driven to a place of doubting God's ability to save us.

I mean, that's what God's people are doing here. As Moses reminds them, be strong and courageous in verses 6. Do not fear or be in dread. By the way, that's the refrain throughout this whole passage.

Be strong. Do not be afraid. And Moses is reminding them, don't focus on the enemy that threatens you. God destroyed the kings of Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites.

He's done it. He's proven himself to you. Keep your eyes on God alone. You're victor. You're general in war. Isn't it true of us that sometimes when we go through seasons of change, especially when we are facing hard times in our life, our focus is usually on the problem at hand, right?

[ 16 : 22 ] That's what we spend our energy on. Look at this mountain. Look at this giant of an issue that I'm facing. But we refuse to see the big God that fights our battles, that is bigger than the giants that we face.

not to mention, it's not just that we are going to be frightened by the little things that come to us, that we're going to take our eyes off of God, but that we're going to lack faith at times and courage in life, that we doubt His ability to help us even in times of, when times are difficult.

By the way, remember, we're Presbyterians. We love to talk about sovereignty, right? That God is sovereign over all things. But understanding God's sovereignty never diminishes our responsibility to actively pursue faith in God, to trust in Him.

Did you hear it? God's sovereignty never diminishes our responsibility to trust in Him. Do you know who demonstrates God's sovereignty and faith in God at the same time?

The young man that's about to lead God's people. Joshua, who was one of the spies that went to look at the land that God's people are going to possess. When everybody else was doubting, they were all doubting Thomases.

[ 17 : 48 ] When they all could not see how that was possible, Joshua knew that it was possible. But he also trusted God. He knew that the only way that God's people are going to possess this land was only through Him alone.

Not through Joshua, not through Moses, not through the mighty, you know, army actually, you know, Israel did not even have a mighty army to speak of. But it was God.

He was going to do it. See, God requires active faith. He wants us to trust in Him. Yes, understand and believe that He's sovereign, that He's in control, that He fights our battles, but we must have faith in Him.

So my question to you, grace and peace, this morning is what is the disposition of your heart and mind when you are going through a season of change, a season of hardship, a season of trial?

Are your eyes fixed on the one who is not going to fail you, on the one who is not going to forsake you? Because that is the refrain in this passage. Be strong and courageous.

[ 19 : 02 ] Do not fear or be in dread, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He goes with you. You don't go alone. He will not leave you or forsake you.

Joshua needed to hear these words as he's about to lead these hard-headed rebels into the promised land. We need to hear these words as we go through times of change in our life.

Understanding that it is our God who is going to be with us. That he's never going to leave us alone. By the way, understand that this is not some psychological boost that scripture is giving to us.

Pull up your bootstraps. Right? Come on! Be courageous and attack. Go at life. Don't be afraid. Everything is going to be alright. I don't think that that's what scripture teaches us.

That's not it. As human beings, we are going to be fearful. We will be fearful. As human beings, courage is not going to come along just like that.

[ 20 : 03 ] Oh yeah, I'm courageous. I'll go after that problem. That's not what the Bible teaches us. But it's understanding that this courage and this faith that we're called to go into life actually comes from two great truths in scripture and from here as well.

First of all, it's really understanding for Moses and for Joshua as well that the people that one is called to lead are those whose very existence proves the faithfulness of God himself.

They are his responsibility. You are God's responsibility. He's got you. That's what I'm saying. God has got you. But secondly, it's understanding that in those moments when we are fearful because we will be fearful, in those moments when we lack courage because we will lack courage, it's understanding that there is the unfailing presence of God with you.

Doesn't that just want to make you say amen? I am never alone. And because I am here, I belong to him.

I am a living proof that God is faithful. I cannot tell you how many times I have recited these verses.

[ 21 : 32 ] Do not fear. Take courage for the Lord is with you. Over the last few months I have recited, I have, I have prayed this prayer, I have counted on those words during times when I was tempted to just run away.

Times when I was tempted to be weary and to doubt. But it's having a great hope in remembering that I am only an under-shepherd, a privileged agent of God.

Only here for the limited time that God has called me and gone when He says, you are done. I am looking at your pastor because that is true of Him as well.

I cannot imagine, I cannot help but think about the times when Joshua and Moses and even God's people at times felt lonely.

Leading these grumbling, hard-headed rebels and in times of change, this pandemic has really helped us come to terms with our own sense of loneliness.

[ 22 : 48 ] I don't know about you but there are times I've felt alone. Alone because I've been in need of my community that was far away from me or alone because everybody was wearing a mask.

Thank God you're not wearing masks. Alone because there are times when I've had to make hard decisions for our church and I felt like everybody else was against me.

You don't know what that feels. Yet God's faithfulness, His presence has reminded me that I am never alone.

And yeah, there are times we are alone because we are confronted by our own sin. Do you ever feel that? Because we are broken. And there are times we feel alone because we suffer the consequences of other people's sin.

sin. But I'm reminded that my God, the unchanging God, is the only one who cuts in order to heal.

[ 24 : 12 ] He strikes down, as the great African philosopher and theologian St. Augustine said, He strikes down so that we can come to understand the inadequacy of our own justice.

And in those moments of loneliness, we are called to lean on Him even more so that we may see His work in us.

That's what this scripture is calling God's people to do. Even as He talks about you, it actually doesn't even say Joshua is going to go ahead of you. No, God is going to go ahead of you.

You are not going alone. So instead of making the best of every opportunity in every situation, we know what we do when we are alone and feeling like we're anxious.

What does this future look like? All those giants that await us in Canaan, they're going to destroy us. What's going to do? Moses is about to die. Who's going to lead us? Is Joshua going to make it?

[ 25 : 19 ] And so we complain and we whine. because we want bigger and better. I mean, God's people wanted to go to the promised land. That's what they wanted. The land that's flowing with milk and honey.

Not the manna, not the stuff in wilderness, but so it is with us. We want the season to change.

How many of us, don't raise your hand by the way, how many of us want the pandemic to just go, just disappear, just take, and I'm just using the pandemic. I'm talking about any situation that you're facing in your life right now that's hard.

You just want to get rid of it, right? Let it just go. I don't want to deal with this. Why can't we just be in Canaan? Let's just be there.

I mean, why do we have to go through this process of change and leadership and let's just be there. Get rid of these things. Is that what God is really up to?

[ 26 : 19 ] Just so that we may move from point A to B and that's it? No. God is about doing much more in your life, brothers and sisters.

God is about wanting you to see the opportunities that he presents to you in every season, good or bad. So how about we just go with the flow?

Yeah, I said it. How about we just go with the flow and say, okay, God, you have allowed this pandemic to happen. Okay, what are the opportunities that you're presenting to us today?

That you want us to believe in you? That you want us to trust in you? That you want us to serve our community? That you want us to love one another? That you want us to cry out to you in prayer?

I mean, listen, Moses had lived his life hearing God say, you shall, and he trusted. And now Moses must trust the Lord when he says, you shall not enter the land.

[ 27 : 21 ] Is he going to trust or not? Are we going to trust or not when God says, no, I am not taking that COVID away.

Not just yet. see, sometimes life's seeming disappointments can prove to be the greatest blessings for us.

But we will miss it if our focus is not on what God is doing, but more on our want for bigger and better. The last reality check, I don't want you to miss it.

And we all know it, but I will say it, is that we will die. That's what's going on to Moses here, right? Moses is about to die. He's passing on the baton to Joshua.

And Moses is never going to see the land. His work has been done. God has said, you come thus far. But God has a beautiful plan for his people.

[ 28 : 29 ] He's bringing Joshua. Joshua is going to lead his people. Do you realize how sometimes we get some disappointed when a great leader, a great pastor, a great whatever passes on and we're filled with unease and we're concerned about what is going to happen to us, what's going to happen to the work that this person started, because now they're gone, what's going to happen?

And God is asking his people to trust, to trust him, trust God. He has a plan in place. And even the good work that was began by Moses, God is able to complete that work through someone else.

What about the truth that we must believe? The good news is, even for God's people here as we continue reading, is that it's really not up to them. It's all about him. It's all about God.

Everything is dependent on God himself. He is in control. He wants them to trust that God is in control. God takes the initiative to act on their behalf. By the way, do you realize that even for Israel, it was God who called them?

It was God that called Abraham from Noah and asked him to trust him and he would lead him and show him this land and he would make a great nation out of him? Do you realize the promise that God's people are wanting so bad is not something that they asked of the Lord?

[ 29 : 51 ] It is something that God himself said, I will choose to do this for you. Now you trust me and come and follow me to where I'm going to show you. God's and he has placed people in authority to do that.

And so for us, even in times of change and transitions, we must trust that it is God who is at work in us.

So we don't fret. We don't wonder who is going to help us now? Who is going to lead us? Where is our Moses? Because he's gone. God's people are not entering the most critical venture of possessing the land alone.

Not in the confidence of their own abilities or what they're able to do, but in the confidence of the one who marches with them. He has time and time again proven to be the victor.

He has destroyed the enemies and he does not change. The same God they have seen act over and over again in their life is the same God that is asking them to step up in faith.

[ 31 : 13 ] And so for us we can trust that, we can believe that, that he's the one who fights for us in moments of fear and turmoil. He is the one who fights for us. We don't have to trust our own finite and weak abilities.

No, we can depend on him. We can be encouraged. Our survival and success is not dependent on us. It's fully dependent on God's leadership. The real general here is not Joshua or Moses.

It is God himself. Again, even in times of great change as we see here, God's plans cannot be thwarted, not even by our own failure and death or sin or loss.

Moses writes and he continues to remind them in verses 16 as we just read, you are going to sin.

In verses 20, 21 he says, and when evils and troubles have come upon them, there's a song that he's writing for them to hear. And then he says, for I know that they are inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give.



[ 32 : 28 ] So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to them, to the people of Israel. He recognizes these people are just sinful. They are bound to rebel against him.

But that is not even going to change God's plan for his people. They're rebellion. They're failures. You know, we often forget just how sinful we are, how unfaithful we are.

But we must always remember our God, the one who calls us, the one who works in us. He does not forget. He is not unfaithful. And that nothing will stand in his way of fulfilling his promises.

I mean, isn't that beautiful? Nothing will stand in the way of God's redeeming, restoring plans for our life.

I know so many of us have felt or so many of us feel in times of great trials and changes in life, we feel like our dreams are dead.

[ 33 : 45 ] Someone said to me the other day that they've gone through a difficult season in their life where they actually feel like they had to bury their dreams in life. They felt like they were dead.

We experience loss, great losses and grief and rightly so. But that God's unchanging hand is always with us.

To God, those things are not dead. They are not. His will for us, His plans for us, will not change. And we can take heart understanding that the future for us is certain.

Not the future that we dream of, but the future that is fully dependent on God alone. Israel, and yes, even here Moses is telling them, you will fail. He actually says, even while I'm still not dead yet, I know you're going to rebel.

But the future that God has planned for you, by His grace and by His mercy, you can be assured of forgiveness, you can be assured of restoration, you can be assured of God's faithfulness.

[ 35 : 01 ] But we understand that the trials we face in this life, whether that's because of our disobedience or because God is simply allowing things to happen in our lives so that He may mold and make our character, those things are not meant to turn us away from God.

No. God is unjust in any way. Those things are actually supposed to draw us to Him and to remind us of God's justice and of His mercy. And some of those bitter experiences are really meant to transform us into something that is much more beautiful and good and useful.

That God is able to take our broken pieces, the broken pieces of our life and that He's able to mend them into something that is beautiful.

As the great old hymn writer sings, time is filled with swift transition. That means that's our life. And He says, not of earth unmoved can stand.

Build your hopes on things eternal. Hold on to God's unchanging hand. How do we do this?

[ 36 : 12 ] I think Moses shows us how to do it. Look at verses 14. So here he is asking, Moses is actually, Joshua is actually being commissioned to meet at the tent of meeting.

And the Lord appears in this tent in a pillar of cloud and the pillar of cloud stands over the entrance of the tent. And then the Lord says to Moses, behold, you're about to lie down with your fathers, the people will rise and sin and all of them.

And then in verses 19 he says, now therefore write this song and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel.

For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey which I swore to give to their fathers and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them and despise me and break my covenant.

And when many evils and troubles have come upon them, this song shall confront them as a witness, for they will live unforgotten in their mouths of their offspring. For I know what they are inclined to do even today before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give them.

[ 37 : 22 ] So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to the people of Israel. Do you have a song that you can be singing to remind you of this great truth?

Do you have a song? What songs do you sing? We have a song. Here's the song we ought to be singing every day. We have God's word.

We have his written, his visual, his vocal, his timeless word that is supposed to guide us through life. You do not have to go through life guessing what you're supposed to do and what you're called to do.

You do not have to walk blindly to figure out life. God's people are told this is what you are supposed to remember, to teach it to your children, to know that you have God's word, to know what is pleasing to the Lord, his word.

Sing it, read it, memorize it, meditate on it day and night. Let it encourage your heart. Let it determine your moral, your social, your spiritual value.

[ 38 : 37 ] Let it shape your whole life. And even before we got there, in verses 10, Moses had told the people, Moses was commanded to the people at the end of every season, of every seven years, at the set time, in every year of release, at the feast of booths, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

I mean, there's even a chosen special times that God's people are supposed to gather so they may hear the word of God. Does that sound familiar? No?

Does that sound familiar? Okay. Just check it. The feast of the tabernacles, it was supposed to be, it was a feast of Thanksgiving, right? It was supposed to be giving thanks and praising God.

For what? For he has delivered them. He is the God who delivered them. And then the year of release, what was that? It was a celebration that their debts had been canceled, you've been forgiven. Oh, hallelujah.

What do we do every Sunday morning when we gather before the presence of God? We give thanks to him for his deliverance. We give thanks to him because we come recognizing our sins have been forgiven.

[ 40 : 00 ] because the word of God has implications for everything, for absolutely everything that we do, how we live our lives, that we live in gratitude to God for what he has done, that we've been forgiven, our debt has been canceled.

What does that mean for us as a church, as grace and peace? What does that mean for you? Pastor Benji will answer that question next week. Again, see how Moses reminds God's people to teach this word, teach this song, let this song confront, I mean, what confronts us of our own need of a Savior?

God's word, right? Teach this song so that every time they sing it, they're confronted with their own sin, but also, they're reminded of a God who is merciful and just and forgiving and all of those things.

Sing that song every day so that you do not grow complacent. Sing that song so that you may pursue righteousness and holiness. Sing that song, let it be in your mouth so that you don't neglect to feed yourself with the bread of life.

Feed your soul. Sing that song so that you may understand that God's word is a lamp unto your feet. Sing that song so that it may be a light unto your path.

- [ 41 : 22 ] Sing that song because as Paul says, this word is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness. Sing that song.

And finally, I think Moses is encouraging his people that God is all knowing. I mean, the picture that is given here in Deuteronomy 31 is God speaking and saying, I know you will sin.

I know you will break the law. I know you're going to be rebellious. Do you believe that God knows that you are going to be rebellious in sin? I mean, isn't that a beautiful thing for us to know as God's people, to know that God knows our sin.

He knows our wrongs even before we commit them. And why is that encouraging to us? Because we know he can deal with your sin. He can take it. Because his son, Jesus Christ, died on the cross.

not for your past sins, but for the sins you carry now and the sins that you will ever commit. Thanks be to God.

- [ 42 : 33 ] See, friends, the picture of God's people entering into the promised land is a powerful promise that ought to affect our lives as we think about seasons of change and trials that we may face in our lives.

Because, listen, see, the promised land, the land of Canaan was not the promise. Uh-oh. The promised land was not the promise.

The promise that God is inviting his people to enter was a more powerful, a more gracious, and an amazing thing. It wasn't just a land that was flowing with milk and honey and beautiful places than what they had experienced in the wilderness.

It was an invitation to be with God. It was in the land. It was an invitation to dwell with God forever and ever.

It is our promise. And our promise came through the Son of God who was born as Emmanuel, which means that he has invited us into a relationship.

- [ 43 : 45 ] So that when we go through times of change and seasons of hardships and things that may make us fearful, things that may make us feel like we do not have any courage, things that give us uncertainty about the future, we are reminded that God has extended an invitation for us to dwell with him.

And that Jesus came and he said, I will be with you till the end of the ages. So brothers and sisters here at grace and peace, as you go through your times of trials, as you face your season of change, whatever that may look like, whether it's hard and filled with anxiety, know that you are not entering into that season.

Know that you are not experiencing that season on your own. But the unchanging hand of God is with you. As Paul reminds us in Philippians that I have learned the secret to facing any situation in life.

I have learned to be content in everything. Whether I face plenty and hunger, trials, anything I face, he says, I know I can do all things through Christ who gives the strength.

And so can you. Would you pray with me? Lord Jesus, we are truly grateful to you, to your faithfulness towards us. Thank you that in every season of change, you are the God who never changes.

- [ 45 : 31 ] Your faithfulness never changes. Your mercy never changes. Your love for us never changes. changes. Your goodness never changes. We may change.

We may face hard changes in our lives, circumstances that are really difficult for us. Sometimes we may not know even what to do as we face those changes in life.

Lord, I don't know what each one of us is going through this morning, but I know that each one of us is facing some kind of a hardship, some kind of a troubling time.

All these things are known to you, so we bring them at the foot of the cross, and we come to you confessing our own fear, our own lack of courage, confessing that sometimes and even now maybe we are here and simply doubting that you are actually with us because we don't sense it, but that doesn't mean that you're not here, that you're not with us, because you are, and so give us eyes of faith to see that you are with us.

Give us the eyes of faith to know that we have no reason to be afraid because you're with us. Above all, Lord, change our hearts, help our unbelief, and remind us that we are never alone.

[ 46 : 56 ] In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Chem to ledge on the side.  
Am